... Dad,

It was so nice to talk to the two of you yesterday. I am so grateful that you are both so understanding. It is still pretty hard for me to talk about [redacted] to other people, but it is also a relief to be able to get everything out and in the open. I've had to keep his secret for months and it has almost got the better of me. I felt like my world fell apart on February 8th and I had no one to turn to. I found a letter in [redacted]' room that came to find out he had intentionally left so I would find it. (he told me later that he couldn't carry this alone anymore) Any way, when I read this letter I was just numb, and I didn't know what to say, let alone how to ask him about it. That evening before [redacted] came home from work, [redacted] came in from his job and he had bought a new outfit at the GAP (what else is new!!). Well when he came downstairs from trying it on for me, I just came right out and asked him if he was gay. He looked at me and and nodded his head, I just froze in position and then realized he was reaching out to me so no matter how I felt, I had to be very strong for him. We talked for a short time because [redacted] came home. We agreed not to tell [redacted] for awhile, because I just didn't know how he would react to all of this plus I needed time to cope myself. I spent the next few weeks crying, not sleeping, forgetting things, and just in a daze. [redacted] and I would talk about everything. He begged me to ask him questions, it was like he had to get it all off his chest. He said it was such a relief to not lie to me anymore, because he had spent too long doing just that. I found out so much in the next few months about our son and the kind of person he really is. Not the tough exterior he showed on the outside, not the cocky attitude he portrayed to everyone that he felt intimidated, just someone who needed to reach out to me and be forgiven for all his cover ups. Believe me it's been so difficult for me to be strong for him because I couldn't except what was going on. I thought, like so many other parents that it was a faze or he was just confused and would change his mind. In fact everyday and night I prayed to God to please help [redacted] to have the will to change and be "quote" NORMAL. Well, of course that isn't the way life is, right? Now, I pray to God that if this is the way [redacted] will always be, please give him the will to be careful, protect himself and to come home to God, we all need God in our lives.

James

James

Ray

James

James

James

As time went on I found it more and more difficult to keep all of this from [redacted]. I found a lady who's son is also gay and we started talking quite a bit and she turned me in to PFLAG (Parents, Family and Friends of gays and lesbians). I went to the president of this organization and spoke openly with her and her husband. They made me feel so comfortable. They are both in their sixty's and their son is 29, gay and a [redacted]

Ray

family practition

[redacted]. We talked on numerous occasions, I told them how I had never held or kept anything from [redacted] they insisted that [redacted]y should tell his father before he found it out from someone on the outside. I already knew that for some time, but everytime I would bring it up to [redacted]y he just couldn't bring himself to tell his Dad because he said he was embarrassed because [redacted] was so macho in his feelings. Well, by this time [redacted] had told [redacted]. It was pretty tough on him at first, but he let [redacted]y know that he supported him and still loved him because they were brothers and always would be. [redacted] also began telling [redacted]y that I couldn't take this much longer and he needed to tell dad. But [redacted]y was still afraid to tell [redacted] for fear his Dad would disown him. (I guess we all just didn't realize how understanding and loving [redacted] would actually be) I was to the point that I thought I was going to go crazy. I remember I went to the priests at our church just sobbing. I just knew if I talked to them I would be able to cope with all of this. Well, when I got to the church, (as God would have it), neither priest was there. Wouldn't you know that would happen! So again back home I went.

Finally, I told [redacted] he just had to tell his father or I would. Again he argued his fears, but said he would think about it. I gave him a couple of days and approached him again. He said he would tell him, but not yet. Well I told him I was going to tell his Dad, which didn't make him happy. I knew deep down inside [redacted]y was struggling with this so I had to help. That evening when Al came home I told him, I needed to seriously talk to him. I think all along he might have felt my fears because when I said it was about [redacted]y he finished my words for me. He said. "[redacted] is gay, isn't he?" I was just flabbergasted. We both started crying. I held [redacted] in my arms as his tears covered his face, I wiped them away and said we could make it through this. He looked at me and told me he loved [redacted]y no matter what! We talked for about ten minutes and then [redacted]y walked in the door. I told him I had just told his Dad. At first he gave me a piercing look and before he could say anything, [redacted] looked at him and told him that no matter what, he was his son and that he loved him and would stand behind him forever. Well the relief that filled the room was amazing. [redacted]y at first was defensive and locked that stubborn jaw of his as if he didn't hear his father just express his feeling of love for him. He kept explaining his life away and again [redacted] told him that he loved him. Well I guess it finally clicked in [redacted]' head what his Dad was saying. We all began talking for hours. We even called [redacted] (who knew I was going to tell [redacted] and was anxiously awaiting us to call) and talked to him. Al cried to [redacted] because his fears go further than the knowledge of [redacted]y being gay, they go to what can happen to [redacted] and how he can protect his son. [redacted] has assured [redacted] of his safety over and over again and told him that he can handle all of this. Well still, we're going to worry for him because he will always have obstacles

James

[illegible], but if we do this as a family and continue our support for [redacted] I think he will be okay.

James' James

In the meantime we need to grow in our knowledge of this world of [redacted] and ours now. We need to show him we understand that he is still the same [redacted], the son we both love and respect, the son we can together find continued love and support for.

I feel so much better being able to tell you both what has been hiding inside me for months. I don't feel it is necessary to tell others right now not because I'm hiding from my family but because it isn't fair to [redacted]. If he wants the family to know, it's his place to tell them. I will tell him, I have told you and let him make the decision of being open to the rest of the family. If you want to hold on to this letter and [redacted] gives the go ahead you can then show the family. I pray all can keep an open heart and clear head about this and most of all continue loving [redacted] the way he is, because that is all he wants. He once said to me, "Mom, do you think I chose this life for myself? Don't you think I want the little white picket fence, the wife, the kids and all that goes with it. I just can't have that and I am happy the way I am." I know he is even happier now that he no longer has to live a life of lies, no longer has to cover up his wherabouts and can feel comfortable around us. We love him with all of our hearts and pray you continue doing the same. Thank you again for being so special to us and so understanding.

James

James

James

Love always,

[redacted] Susan